AMERICAN

MEDICAL BOTANY.

CONIUM MACULATUM.

Hemlock.

PLATE XI.

A PLANT bearing the name of *Conium*, κωνειον, has been noted as a poison from remote antiquity. In consequence of the power which it possessed when given in sufficient quantities, of destroying life in a certain and almost immediate manner, it was used at Athens as a mode of execution for those condemned to death by the tribunal of Areopagus. Socrates and Phocion were among the distinguished ancients, who suffered death by the agency of this mortal poison. The accounts which have been left respecting it would lead us to believe that its operation was speedy, and unattended with any violent or long protracted suffering. It was not only employed as an instrument of public execu-